

What to Do With a Heavy God?

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1 Samuel 5:1-12

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The Ark Captured:

- Israel took God lightly - defeat and the ark is captured!
- God was not captured - God is never defeated
- Ichabod^{1Sa4:22} - God's glory departed from Israel

Dagon Toppled:

- Despair in Shiloh; Delight in Ashdod as they present the ark
- Philistines were religious syncretists
- We need to pay attention^{1Cor10:11} Pagan beliefs drove them...
- Today: evolution; secular philosophy; secular science
- These ideas influence our understanding of man and sin
- We must beware of these 'Philistine' ideas which corrupt

False Religion Exposed:

- Reversal: God's glory gone^{4:22} : Lord's hand was heavy^{5:6}
- Ark is setup in Dagon's temple - Dagon topples 1st night^{5:3}
- Dagon is then decapitated^{5:4-5}; false religion makes ritual
- Philistines should have evaluated Dagon & religion

From Glory to Heavy Hand:

- Lord's hand is heavy against Philistines: tumors, etc.
- Philistines turn toward government⁸, not God
- The Lord's heavy hand was against Gath⁹ also
- Then on to Ekron¹⁰, public outcry is great. Lord's heavy hand
- Philistines learned: Don't take the True God lightly
- They send the ark away - back to Israel¹¹

God Glorified

God delivered a clear message about His glory & weight

God is a Living God

- Philistines saw their gods as objects or idols
- God is a thing to be manipulated for our purposes^{Jeremiah 10:10}

God is the Only True God

- 1st Commandment^{Ex20:3}
- If you make anything else god, He will thwart it!
- Remember who God is^{Isaiah46:9}!

God is the Powerful and Mighty God

- When Israel trusted God they defeated enemies easily^{Dt32:30}
- When they took God lightly, they were defeated
- Trust in God's merciful provision for you^{Heb9:27}

God is a Merciful and Saving God

- Philistines didn't learn or reflect on God's presence
- They should have when Dagon was thrown down twice
- They sent God away
- God has entrusted us, the Church, with a glorious message!
- When we feel powerless look to God who is NOT!
- Let us not give in to the world's tactics, rely on God's means
- Let us remember faith and resting in God's Word is critical!
- Remember we are to stand in faith - Ephesians 6:10-18 - note defensive, not offensive. Let us stand on God's Truth!